

## **JUSTIFICATION FOR RENEWAL NATIONAL SEA GRANT ADVISORY BOARD**

Activities Under Extant Charter – Four National Sea Grant Advisory Board (hereinafter the “Board”) meetings were held during the current charter period from August 12, 2014, through August 11, 2016.

Accomplishments and Recommendations include:

### **Program Evaluation**

Sea Grant programs are held to a high standard. Under the National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP) Act of 1976, as amended, 33 U.S.C. § 1121 et seq. (hereinafter the “Act”), the Board shall advise the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere (hereinafter the “Under Secretary”), acting for the Secretary of Commerce pursuant to 33 U.S.C. § 1128(b) of the Act, and the Director of the NSGCP (hereinafter the “Director”), and meet with the Under Secretary of Commerce as appropriate on matters related to the responsibilities and authorities set forth in the Act.

*Site Visits:* The Board participated in a review of Sea Grant programs’ in areas of program management, stakeholder engagement, and network collaboration. The review focuses on how a Sea Grant program functions internally. Each site visit had at least one National Sea Grant Advisory Board member participate.

*Performance Review Panels:* In October of 2015, the Board participated in the quadrennial Performance Review Panels - a retrospective evaluation of each programs’ overall impact on society from both an environmental and a socioeconomic perspective based on the program’s 4-year strategic plan. Each review panel had at least one National Sea Grant Advisory Board member participate.

*Pennsylvania Sea Grant College Program Review:* During this period, the Board reviewed an application from Pennsylvania Sea Grant to upgrade their status from a Sea Grant Institution to a Sea Grant College Program. College status is the highest level status obtainable a Sea Grant program can acquire, and is conferred by the Secretary of Commerce. The Board was very impressed with their application and recommended the status change based on the criteria set forth for evaluation. The final report is attached.

*Planning, Implementation and Evaluation (PIE) II Committee:* The Board participated in a reevaluation of the PIE process for the NSGCP. The committee assessed the efficacy and implications of the PIE system, and reviewed what worked, identified weaknesses, and recommended revisions to improve and streamline the process where possible. This report is expected to be approved in the first week of August, 2016. The approved report will be submitted in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Database.

*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Sea Grant Liaison Review:* The Board participated in evaluating current NOAA Sea Grant Liaison Positions. The purpose of the evaluation is to review the progress of these positions, suggest improvements of the positions by exploring the success of various models/arrangements, highlight best practices, and recommend opportunities for improvement. The report is expected to be approved in the first week of August, 2016. The approved report will be submitted in the FACA Database.

## **Committees and Reports**

*Planning, Implementation and Evaluation (PIE) II Committee:* A description of this committee is above. This report is expected to be approved in the first week of August, 2016. The report will be submitted in the FACA Database.

*Biennial Report to Congress:* As mandated by Congress, the Board completed their 3rd Biennial report on the state of Sea Grant in 2012, and is currently working on the 2016 report, due in October, 2016.

The Executive Committee of the Board was involved in discussions with the National Sea Grant Office, NOAA Leadership, and the Sea Grant Association on reauthorization of the Act.

A list of reports for the current charter period are as follows:

- 1) Pennsylvania Sea Grant College Program Review (attached)
- 2) Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation Review II Committee Report (est. approval in August, 2016)
- 3) NOAA Liaison Review Report (est. approval in August, 2016)

## **Sea Grant Leadership Activities:**

Four meetings of the full Board were held during the current charter period, (September 2014 in Clearwater Beach, Florida; March 2015 in Washington, DC; November 2015 in Honolulu, HI; and March 2016 in Washington, DC). During the current charter period, the Board focused on the following issues: preparation of the Sea Grant Act reauthorization; development of the 2014 and 2016 Biennial reports to Congress on the state of Sea Grant; the Sea Grant Planning, Implementation and Evaluation process, participation in Site Visits and Performance Review Panels; review of the NOAA Sea Grant Liaison positions; and analysis of the future of Sea Grant including opportunities for coordination and growth.

All meetings are relevant to the Board's legislatively mandated responsibilities to provide advice to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, and the Director of the NSGCP on the performance, planning, and operation of the Sea Grant program.

The Board also takes a leadership role in assessing current activities and future directions for the NSGCP in Sea Grant's four focus areas, including technical assessments at both the national and individual program level. The Board has representatives for all four focus areas, as well as the

Sea Grant Extension, Education, Communication, Research, and Legal networks. The Board sends a representative to the Oceanic and Atmospheric Research Senior Research Council and NOAA Science Advisory Board meetings when possible. The Board also looks at the activity of the National Sea Grant Office and reflects on their own activity to provide recommendations to improve operations of both bodies.

Revision to Extant Charter: The annual cost of operating the Board for 2016-2018 is being estimated at \$275,000, a modest increase as compared to \$250,000, which was the estimate for the 2014 Charter.

Need for Renewal - Renewal of this Charter is essential to the conduct of agency business and is in the public interest. Establishment of the Board is required by statute, 33 U.S.C. § 1128(b)(2). In each succeeding Reauthorization, the Board size, terms of office, and duties have been reaffirmed. Under the terms of the Reauthorization, the Department proposes to continue to draw on the expertise of this Board to advise the Under Secretary and the Director of the NSGCP, regarding the understanding, assessment, development, utilization, and conservation of the Nation's ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources.

Balanced Membership - The Board has developed a Membership Balance Plan as suggested by the General Services Agency and required by the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The Board uses this plan in conjunction with the NSGCP Act to ensure a balanced membership. A copy of this plan is attached.

Other Factors – The Board has been an integral component of the program providing essential service for the effective and efficient operation of the Sea Grant Program since 1976. Representative of the public and private sectors of the Sea Grant partnership, the Board provides an independent perspective for the cost-shared, university-based NSGCP which is aimed at the development and wise use of the Nation's marine resources through research, education, and technology. The Board provides advice and guidance not only on scientific, outreach, and education programs, but more importantly, on the priorities and strategic direction of the overall NSGCP, and on the conversion of research and development activities into economic development and environmental conservation. There are no other advisory committees or Federal entities that serve this function. The work of this committee is ongoing, based on its previously described objectives and duties, and in accordance with the NSGCP Act.